

STRANGE

TALES

CRYPTO



THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S TALE

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A "LIVING CORPSE"?
DEAR READER? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE
DEAD CAN BE REVIVED? THAT THEY CAN BE
MADE TO LIVE ONCE AGAIN? THEN READ THIS
STORY. ONE OF THE BEST OF MY TERROR-
TALES THAT I KEEP HERE IN THE CRYPT! IT
IS THE STORY OF JAMES COOPER...AND HOW
HE CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD! I CALL IT...

A SHOCKING WAY TO DIE!

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MY STORY BEGINS IN A COURTROOM, CROWDED WITH THE CROWDS WHO HAVE COME TO WATCH A CONVICTED MURDERER BE SENTENCED TO DEATH...
AND IT IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS COURT, JAMES COOPER, THAT YOU BE SENT TO STATE PRISON, AND THERE BE ELECTROCUTED ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7TH...
AND MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL!

NO...
NOT!



I'VE BEEN FRAMED! YOU'VE ALL AGAINST ME! BUT... I'LL GET EVEN! I'LL COME BACK... AND I'LL GET YOU! ALL OF YOU! I'LL HAVE REVENGE! YOU'LL SEE! I... LET'S GO, COOPER!



THE EVENING PAPERS CARRIED BLARING HEADLINES OF JAMES COOPER'S TRIUMPH...



BUT A FEW NIGHTS LATER, IN A RAMSHACKLED HOUSE, OUTSIDE OF TOWN...

FOR THE DEATH PRIZE, GENTLEMEN, I CAN BRING JAMES COOPER BACK FROM THE DEAD... REVIVE HIM AFTER HE HAS BEEN ELECTROCUTED!

WHAT? YOU CAN RAISE HIM LIVE AGAIN?



THAT IS CORRECT! I HAVE BEEN EXPERIMENTING ON ELECTROCUTION SEATING FOR MANY YEARS, AND HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WITH ANIMALS! I HAVE LONGED TO EXPERIMENT ON A HUMAN... THAT IS WHY I'VE CONTACTED YOU!



AND SO... A FEW DAYS BEFORE JAMES COOPER WAS TO DIE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR... HE HAD A VISITOR IN THE DEATH HOUSE...



WHAT DO YOU THINK, JIMMY? WANT TO CHANGE IT?

OF COURSE, YOU FOOL! WHAT HAVE I GOT TO LOSE? PAY HIM HIS MONEY!

THE DEAL WAS MADE, AND ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7TH, AT THE APPOINTED HOUR...



ALL RIGHT, COOPER! LET'S GO!

SURE, GUARD? SURE!

DOWN THE LONG CORRIDOR TO THE LITTLE GREEN DOOR, THE CONVICTED MAN... PLANNED BY THE WARDEN AND A GUARD... SLOWLY MADE HIS WAY...DOWN THE "LAST MILE."



THE HEAVY DOOR SWUNG OPEN! INSIDE, SAT REPORTERS ARRANGED TO COVER THE EXECUTION...



OUTSIDE THE DARK GREY WALLS, IN THE PRISON YARD, STOOD A BLACK BEARDED FACE. PEERED OUT FROM BEHIND SHOWN CURTAINS...



WHILE WITHIN, THE PRISONER WAS BEING STRAPPED INTO THE LETHAL CHAIR...



ELECTRODES WERE FASTENED INTO PLACE...

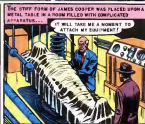


A SMALL MAN STEPPED TO A CONTROL PANEL AND PULLED A SWITCH...



THE STENCH OF BURNING FLESH AND BIRCHBARK FILLED THE ROOM AS THE LIGHTS DIMMED! AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, A DOCTOR STEPPED FORWARD AND PLACED HIS STETHOSCOPE ON JAMES COOPER'S HEART...





SLOWLY THE DRAPED FIGURE STIRRED... THEN SAT UP! THE SHEET FELL, WHAT ARE...





DON'T AID IT! NOW... I'M GONNA GET THAT JURY!



WAIT, JIMMY! DON'T DO NOTHING! FOOL SHIT! FORGET THE JURY! THEY JUST DO THEIR DUTY!

I SWEAR REVENGE! NOW I'M GONNA GET IT!



HE... HE'S DIFFERENT? HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ALL THERE!

MAYBE... WHAT THE PROF SAID... ABOUT HIS BRAIN BEING DAMAGED...



LATE THE NEXT NIGHT, ON A DARK STREET...

ALL RIGHT, JUROR NUMBER ONE HERE'S WHERE YOU GET YOURS!



WHAT? WHO IS IT? I... NO... NO... COOPER...



AND THE NEXT MORNING...



MEANWHILE, AT THE COOPER GANG'S HIDE-OUT...

IT'S THE JURY!

GOOD LORD! LOOK AT HIM!

HE LOOKS WORSE THAN YESTERDAY!

WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

IT WAS TRUE! JAMES COOPER'S BURNED AND SEARED BODY DID LOOK WORSE! IT SEEMED TO BE... ~~POSSIBLY~~

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT, JIMMY! THEY'VE TURNED THE MEAT ON...

WHO CARES? I'LL DEF THEM EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!



AGAIN THAT NIGHT, JAMES COOPER STALKED A VICTIM...

THAT TAKES CARE OF YOU, JUROR NUMBER TWO!



AND THE PAPERS PLAYED IT UP...

TAR NEWS

SECOND JUROR FOUND MURDERED

POLICE SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG

COURTROOM PROMISE TO RETURN IS FULFILLED!

THE POLICE HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG SINCE THE MURDER OF JUROR NUMBER TWO. THE SEARCH WAS FRUITLESS UNTIL THE POLICE FOUND THE BURNED AND SEARED BODY OF A MAN WHOSE NAME WAS JAMES COOPER. THE POLICE HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG SINCE THE MURDER OF JUROR NUMBER TWO. THE SEARCH WAS FRUITLESS UNTIL THE POLICE FOUND THE BURNED AND SEARED BODY OF A MAN WHOSE NAME WAS JAMES COOPER.

THE POLICE WILLED SUSPECT AFTER SUSPECT? MEANWHILE THE OTHER JURORS WERE GIVEN POLICE PROTECTION...

RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'LL TALK... I'LL TALK! IT'S COOPER! HE'S ALIVE!

YOU'RE LYING!



FEAR? THEN WHY DON'T YOU LOOK IN HIS GRAVE FOR HIS BODY?

HOWAM I GET THE NECESSARY PAPERS? WE'LL TAKE THIS STODOLIE'S SUGGESTION!



BY COURT ORDER, THE GRAVE OF JAMES COOPER WAS OPENED...



IT... IT'S EMPTY? HE IS ALIVE?



IT CAN'T BE! I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IF I HADN'T SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES!

THAT NIGHT, JAMES COOPER AGAIN FOMOED THE CITY, BEING CAREFUL TO KEEP OUT OF SIGHT? HE WAS A CRAZY THING TO SEE! HIS FLESH HAD ALMOST COMPLETELY DECAYED FROM HIS BODY!

WHILE THE GOES ARE GUARDING THE JUDGE, I'LL GET THE JUDGE THAT SENTENCED ME...



HIS HORROROUS FACE PEERED INTO THE STUDY OF JUDGE WARREN HAWLEY...

GOOD! HE'S ALONE!



SLOWLY HE OPENED THE FRENCH DOORS AND ENTERED...

COOPER? GOOD LORD? WHAT? WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE...

I... I'VE COME TO... TO KILL YOU, JUDGE!



THE JUDGE SNATCHED A FORK FROM THE NEARBY FIREPLACE... AND AS COOPER ADVANCED TOWARD HIM...

KEEP AWAY, COOPER... KEEP AWAY! ALL RIGHT! YOU FORCE ME TO...

YAAAAAH!



THE BLOW FROM THE HEAVY IRON FORK CAUGHT COOPER ACROSS THE FACE, AND THE REMAINING FLESH FELL AWAY... THEN...

HE... HE COLLAPSED INTO A HEAP OF BONES... AND DECAYED AWAY!



LATER, AFTER THE CORNER HAD EXAMINED COOPER'S REMAINS...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF IT, JUDGE! YOU SAY HE TALKED AND WALKED? ACCORDING TO MY TESTS, HE'S BEEN DEAD SINCE NOVEMBER 7TH!

DEAD? BUT, HE LIVED... I SAW HIM...



YES, JUDGE? COOPER LIVED? AT LEAST HE MOVED... AND TALKED? BUT HE WAS A LIVING CORPSE? AND HIS BODY CONTINUED TO DECAY, AS ALL DEAD BODIES DO? SOON, HE HAD DECAYED TO SUCH A POINT THAT EVEN THE 'LIFE' THAT THE POOR OLD PROFESSOR HAD GIVEN HIM SLIPPED AWAY? TOO BAD, THOUGH! HE WAS GOING TO LOOK REAL PRETTY! DIDN'T FEEL THAT SO? WELL... FOR SOME SPINE-TINGLING TALK, READ ON...

IF YOU CAN'T JUST DON'T GO TO PHOENIX LIKE POOR OLD JIMMY?



THIS IS THE TALE OF TWO PEOPLE WHO VISITED AN AMUSEMENT PARK...AND WERE *NOT* AMUSED! I CALL IT...

TERROR RIDE!



GEORGE AND RUTH HAD BEEN DRIVING FOR HOURS WHEN THEY SAW THE SIGN...

LOOK, GEORGE!
AN AMUSEMENT
PARK! LET'S
STOP FOR A WHILE!

OKAY, RUTH!
WE CAN TAKE IN
SOME *ROBERT*



THE COOL, SEPTEMBER AIR STIRRED LAZILY AS THEY ENTERED THE SHADY GATES AND WALKED DOWN THE MIDWAY...

OH, DEAR! THE
ROLLER COASTER
IS CLOSED UP!

LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE
PLACE IS BOARDED
UP WITH THE SEASONS
ONCE, YOU KNOW!



GEORGE AND RUTH STOOD ALONE
ON THE DELETED MIDWAY...

SEE? I GUESS
WE MIGHT AS
WELL LEAVE!

YEAH!
TOO BAD!

SUDDENLY

WHAT'S THAT,
RUTH?

SOUNDS LIKE
WATER
SPLASHING!

OH LOOK,
GEORGE!
HOW QUANT!

AN OLD MILL
RIDE... WITH A
WATER-
WHEEL!

I'M GLAD AT LEAST ~~ONE~~
RIDE IS OPEN! LET'S
TRY IT!

I... I DON'T KNOW, GEORGE!
IT'S ALWAYS SO ~~DARK~~
IN THOSE THINGS...

MMMM! WHAT BETTER
PLACE TO TAKE MY
~~NEW BRIDE~~ THAN ON
A DARK BOAT RIDE!

OH, GEORGE!
STOP!

HOW
BARE, PLEASE?

TWO? AREN'T VERY
BARE, ARE YOU?

NO! NOT MANY PEOPLE COME
HERE THIS TIME OF YEAR!
ALL RIGHT - TAKE THE NEXT
BOAT!

COMFORTABLE,
GOREY?

SHUS AS
A BOB.

HAVE A PLEASANT
TRIP, FOLKS!

THE BOAT WITH GEORGE AND RUTH MOVED SLOWLY TOWARD THE TANNING BLACK MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL...

THIS LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE FUN...

PLEASE, GEORGE? THE MAN WILL BEAR YOU...



AND THEN...

COULD IT BE DARK?

...THE DARKER THE BETTER!



YOU'RE FRESH, GEORGE, ARNOLD?

DID YOU FORGET WHO YOU JUST MARRIED TODAY, MRS. ARNOLD? NOW TAKE A...



SUDDENLY, A LIGHT FLASHED ON...

WHAT THE...?



OH, IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE WAX DISPLAYS THEY HAVE IN THESE RIDES!

BUT... IT LOOKS... SO REAL!



THE BOAT MOVED SLOWLY FORWARD, AND THE DISPLAY DARKENED AGAIN...

THOSE WAX FIGURES, WHEN THEY'RE DONE BY AN EXPERT, ALWAYS DO LOOK REAL! NOW WHERE WERE WE?

YOU WERE ABOUT TO GIVE ME A...



HOW HORRIBLE!

SAY! THIS ISN'T FUNNY ANY MORE! THESE DISPLAYS ARE... REPULSIVE!





AS THE FRIGHTENED COUPLE
SPLASHED THROUGH THE BLACK
TUNNEL...

GREAT SCOTT! I JUST
THOUGHT OF SOME-
THING, RUTH!

BRIEF!



THAT CORPSE WAS
REAL! MAYBE THE
DISPLAYS WERE
REAL TOO!

OH, NO...
AND...



ON THROUGH THE BURNY DARKNESS
THEY WAGED...

WE'LL BE
OUT SOON!

I SAID...I'M
TIRED! I'VE GOT
TO REST,
GEORGE!



HERE? HERE'S A
PLACE TO SIT
DOWN!

THANK GOODNESS!
I'M ABOUT READY
TO...



SUDDENLY, THE PLACE WHERE THEY HAVE STOPPED IS
FLOODED WITH LIGHT...

IT'S ANOTHER
DISPLAY...

IT IS REAL...BECAUSE...
IT IS REAL!



FEAR AND TERROR CLUTCHED AT THEIR HEARTS AS
GEORGE AND RUTH RUSHED FROM THE HORRIBLE
SCENE FURTHER INTO THE DRY BLOOM...

HERE? HERE'S AN
EMPTY DISPLAY!
YOU CAN REST
HERE!

IT LOOKS...LIKE
SOME KIND OF
TORTURE CHAIR...



AS SOON AS YOU CATCH
YOUR BREATH, WE'LL
GET OUT OF HERE, RUTH!

THE OWNER...HE MUST
BE A *BRILLIANT*! A
HOMICIDAL MAMMOT...





YOU DIDN'T LAUGH AT MY EXHIBITS...DID YOU?

GEORGE!
IT'S...
HIM?

LOOK AT HIS
EYES... HE
IS **AMOK!**



ALL SUMMER THEY LAUGHED AT MY EXHIBITS, THE FOOLS! THEY SAID MY WAX DUMMIES DIDN'T LOOK **REAL!** NOW I CAN SHOW THEM! HEH-HEH...

RUTH, GET
READY TO
GO... A
MOMENT
FOR IT!

NO MORE WILL THEY LAUGH! NOW MY EXHIBITS LOOK **REAL!** BECAUSE I USE **REAL PEOPLE!** AND THIS IS MY LAST DISPLAY... A MEDIEVAL FORTUNE CHAMBER! THANKS TO YOU FINE LADS LIKE THE OTHERS WHO WANDERED INTO THE DESERTED AMUSEMENT PARK AND FOUND THIS RIDE...



...I WILL BE ABLE TO **FINISH IT!** THERE'S NO USE RUNNING...YOU CAN'T GET OUT! THE EXIT IS **CLOSED...AND LOCKED!**



RUN, RUTH!
NOW!

KAH-KAH!
I'LL GET YOU...
NEVER FEAR...



THERE! EASY... **SHAKLES!** HE'S CARRYING EASY! HE WANTS TO PUT US ON THAT **STRETCH BACK!** SHAK!

GEORGE...HE'S
COMING AFTER
US...



THERE! GEORGE... THE
END OF THE TUNNEL...

AND THE EXIT... IT
IS **LOCKED!**



IT WAS THE MOST UNUSUAL FRATERNITY INITIATION EVER SEEN ON THE CAMPUS. . . OR ON ANY OTHER CAMPUS, FOR THAT MATTER! THE THREE FLEDGEEES WERE TAKEN OUT TO THE OLD PALMER HOME ON THAT INFAMOUS NIGHT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, AND INSTEAD OF THE PLACE BEING AMUSINGLY HAUNTED, IT TURNED INTO A—

HOUSE OF HORROR



IT WAS ON A NIGHT IN 1934 THAT THIS STRANGE TALE HAD ITS BEGINNING! TODAY, FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, THERE IS STILL NO EXPLANATION FOR WHAT HAPPENED AT THE PALMER PLACE!



GET A LOAD OF LPS WILTON BACK THERE... SCARING THE WITS OUT OF THOSE POOR FRESHMEN!



HE'S GONE ABOUT PREPARING THIS HOUSE FOR THE INITIATION AS IF IT WERE THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 1934 GAME!

HE CLAIMS THAT EVEN IF IT WAS JUST AN OLD DUMP BEFORE... IT IS HAUNTED NOW!

AND AS THE LAST STEP IN YOUR
RADING, BOYS, YOU'LL HAVE TO
PASS THE TEST OF COURAGE!
A LONG, JOURNEY INTO THE
OLD PALMER PLACE, WHICH
LEGEND TELLS US IS
HAUNTED!



EACH ONE OF YOU WILL FOLLOW
THE INSTRUCTIONS I GAVE
ON THE RIDE OUT HERE! IF
ANYONE WANTS TO DROP
OUT NOW, LET HIM SPEAK UP
OR SHUT HIS MOUTH FOR-
EVER! EVERYONE
READY?

Y-YES, I-I GUESS
SO.



HERE'S YOUR LIGHT, HENDERSON.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL START THE
GALL ROLLING! AND REST AS-
SURED OF ONE THING, BOYS... THIS
IS NO SCHOOLBOY PRANK, AS
YOU'LL SOON LEARN!
HEH, HEH!



WAVE THAT LANTERN AT US
FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND
LANDINGS, HENDERSON! AND
JUST GOOE YOUR HEELS IN THE
ATTIC TILL I COME UP FOR YOU!
IF YOU'RE NOT ALREADY BATHED
IN GOLD SWEAT, THAT IS!



YOU'RE DRIVING THESE FRESHMEN
PRETTY HARD, LEE. YOU
MUST HAVE GIVEN THIS
PLACE QUITE A BUILD-
UP, BECAUSE THEY
LOOKED SCARED TO
DEATH! FROM THE
LOOK IN HENDERSON'S
EYE, HE'D KILL YOU
IN A MINUTE IF HE
HAD THE CHANCE!



T-THERE HE
IS NOW
WAVING THAT
LANTERN
AT THE FIRST
FLOOR WINDOW!

NOW THE FUN
STARTS! I WENT
THROUGH THAT
PLACE LAST
WEEK, RIGGED
A FEW CON-
TRAPTIONS FOR
THE BOYS TO
TRIP OVER!
DOUGHT TO BE GOOD
FOR SOME LAUGHS
BEFORE THE EVE-
NING'S OVER!



THERE HE IS AGAIN!
POOR KID MUST
HAVE RAN ALL THE
WAY UP TO THE
SECOND FLOOR! AS
IF THERE WAS A
GHOST BEHIND 'EM!





THERE MAY BE MORE THAN GHOSTS BEHIND 'EM BOYS. HEH, HEH!

ONE OF 'EM MAY HAVE GOTTEN HENDERSON THEN 'CAUSE IT'S BEEN SEVERAL MINUTES SINCE WE SAW HIM AT THE SECOND FLOOR... AND IT DOESN'T TAKE THAT LONG TO GET UP TO THE ATTIC!



JUST A BORN PRANK, THAT'S ALL! THINKS HE'LL TURN THE TABLES AND SCARE US A BIT! PROBABLY SITTING UP THERE IN THE ATTIC, WAITING TO JUMP OUT AND TELL BOB AT ME WHEN I COME UP TO RELIEVE HIM!

SO WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE CHANGE OF PLANS. TO MEET THE EMERGEN CYE INSTEAD OF LES WILTON GOING UP THERE, WE'LL PICK THE SECOND FLEDGEE! HEY, WATERS!



M-METTY-Yeah, BE RIGHT THERE!

I DON'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT, BUT WILTON'S GOT THESE FRESH-MON SHAKES IN THEIR BOOTS! NO-GUT SHOULD NORMALLY TREM BLE AT THE THOUGHT OF ASSAULTED HOUSE... UNLESS HE THOUGHT THERE WAS DIRTY WORK AFOOT!



HMM... MORE THERE IS?

HEH HEH! LOOK AT HIS FACE, WILL YOU! IMAGINE THAT... A GROWN MAN, SHAKING LIKE A TEEN-AGE GAIL GOING PAST A GRAVEYARD!



I'M GO... GIMMING TO THINK THAT I WOULDN'T LIKE THIS SET-UP MYSELF!

WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU DO TO THAT HOUSE, WILTON? THESE BOYS HAVE A LOOK OF ABSOLUTE SPREAD ON THEIR FACES!



AH, IT'S NOTHING! JUST A COUPLE LOOSE STEPS, A FEW CORNERS, SOME SOLIDARY DOORS.

LET'S HAPPENED AGAIN, WATERS NEVER REACHED THAT ATTIC WINDOW! I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS.



AH, THEY PROBABLY TURNED RIGHT AROUND FROM THE SECOND FLOOR... AN WE'LL FIND 'EM HIDING NEAR THE FRONT DOOR! IF THESE GUYS HAVEN'T THE GUTS TO GO UP THERE, THEN THEY'RE NOT FIT TO BE GAMMA DELTAS!

YOU ARLING. C'MON OVER HERE!
YOU'RE NEXT, MAN. GO UP TO THAT
ATTIC AND TELL THOSE PALS OF
YOURS TO STOP THEIR MONKEY-
SHINES! THIS IS A PRATERNITY
IMITATION. NOT A SCHOLARLY
PRANK!



I-I DON'T
THINK I...
I G... GAVE
TO GO!



YOU'LL GO ALL RIGHT,
OR THE Y'LL FIND YOU
IN A DITCH! I DIDN'T
RIS UP THIS PLACE
JUST TO HAVE A
COUPLA PUNKS SPOL
OUR FUN! IF THE
THRE (OF YOU ARE
PLANNING TO GIVE
ME A SCARE, YOU'LL
REGRET IT!

W. WE DIDN'T PLAN ANY JOKES
LIKE T... THAT! AND I DON'T LIKE
THE LOOKS OF THIS. IT'S IN
NOT LIKE WATERS AND HENDER-
SON TO FOOL AROUND! B. BUT
I'LL GO!



SPOKE LIKE A
REAL GAMMA
DELTA-BE!

HUH, HUH? LOOK AT 'EM SHAKING!
BET THE OTHER TWO'LL HAVE
A BIG SURPRISE FOR ARLING.
THINKING IT'S THEIR BELOVED
LES WILTON!

MAYBE THE
KID'S RIGHT, LES.
MAYBE SOME-
THING WAS SO
WRONG UP
THERE!



BUTS! NOTHING'S WRONG UP
THERE... ARLING'S AT THE FIRST
FLOOR SAFE AND SOUND! FROM
THE LOOK ON HIS FACE HE MUST
HAVE STUMLED OVER THAT
SKELETON I BORROWED FROM
THE LAB, TOO!



HE'S AT THE
SECOND
FLOOR.

ON HIS WAY TO THE
ATTIC! HOLD YOUR
BREATH, BOYS...
HERE'S WHERE THE
REAL FUN BEGINS...
IN THE NEXT SIXTY
SECONDS.



FIVE MINUTES,
WILTON... AND
NO SIGN OF
ARLING! ALL
THREE OF 'EM
GONE!

THE STUPID PUNKS. TOO YELLOW TO
TAKE THAT LAST FLIGHT OF STEPS!
I'LL SHOW 'EM REAL FEAR...



SIMPLE THAT LIGHT, JENKINS. I'LL GO UP THERE MYSELF FIRST TO PROVE TO ALL OF YOU THAT THERE'S NO DANGER UP THERE AND SECOND, TO KICK THOSE GUYS OUT OF THAT PLACE. AND OUT OF THE GAMMA DELTA!



MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET WILTON PLAN THIS WHOLE INITIATION BY HIMSELF? HE'S LIKELY TO GO OVERBOARD ON THIS HAZING BUSINESS. THE BOYS IN THAT HOUSE MAY HAVE HUNT THEMSELVES!



I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T LIKE THIS WHOLE SET-UP! THE WINDOW... IT'S BEEN SMASHED!

I... IT'S WILTON!

THOUGHT I'D INJECT A LITTLE EXCITEMENT INTO THIS INITIATION. DO I LOOK ANY THE WORSE FOR WEARS?



NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER.



FIFTEEN MINUTES SINCE WE SAW WILTON!

IS THERE *ANY* SOMETHING WRONG UP THERE?

THE SECONDS TICKED BY IN THAT LONELY AREA KNOWN AS RALLIER'S PLACE. SECONDS BECAME MINUTES... AND THE MINUTES STRETCHED INTERMINABLY.



SOMETHING'S GOING ON IN THAT HOUSE THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT! AND THE WAY THOSE THREE FRESHMAN HATED WILTON... THEY MAY HAVE GIVEN HIM A BAD BEATING!

I... I HOPE IT'S ONLY *TRAP*! LET'S HURRY!



WE'LL COMB THIS PLACE UNTIL WE FIND ALL FOUR OF 'EM! MINE. FRED SEARCH EACH ROOM WITH A FINE-TOOTH COMB! WE'LL SET THIS THING STRAIGHTENED OUT IF IT TAKES THE REST OF THE NIGHT!

NOT A TRACE OF ANY-ONE IN THE FRONT ROOM

OR ANY OF THE OTHERS EITHER? THE QUIET WASN'T EVEN DISTURBED!

AND OUTSIDE, NO FOOT-PRINTS! WHICH MEANS THEY'RE ALL STILL IN THE HOUSE!

NO ONE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER? AND SINCE NO ONE COULD HAVE LEFT THE HOUSE... THEY MUST ALL BE UP THERE!

T. THE ATTIC?

T. THIS IS PROBABLY WILTON'S IDEA OF A JOKE. HAZING THE WHOLE BUNCH OF US? W. WELL... HERE GOES!

T. THE DOOR, IT OPENS EASILY! AS IF SOME-ONE ELSE OPENED IT BEFORE WE'D... OH!

G-O-O-O-O HEAVENS!

I... IT'S WILTON! H... HE'S AGED FIFTY YEARS IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES. H... HIS HAIR... IT'S TURNED WHITE!

H... HE LOOKS AS IF HE'S GONE INSANE! LISTEN TO HIS MOANING!

NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS... NEVER EVEN HEARD OF ITS EQUAL! THAT WILTON! NO! CAN'T GET A COHERENT WORD OUT OF HIM! HIS MIND... IT'S CRACKED... HE'S COMPLETELY INSANE! AND THE OTHERS... VANISHED!

AGAIN AND AGAIN THE POLICE SEARCHED THE BUILDING THE NEXT FEW DAYS BUT NO FURTHER INFORMATION WAS UNCOVERED...

...AND THEN ABOUT A WEEK AFTER THE NIGHT OF HORROR

THERE SHE GOES... CONSUMED TO FLAMES BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONER! AND WITH IT... THE LAST TRACE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO ARLING, WATERS AND HENDERSON!

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IT HAPPENED AND NO EXPLANATION HAS EVER BEEN FOUND AS TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE THREE FRESHMEN. OR WHAT AWFUL HORRORS LET WILTON SAW IN THE MOMENTS BEFORE HIS MIND CRUMBLLED!

WITHIN HALF-AN-HOUR THE POLICE HAD ARRIVED AT PALMER'S PLACE... AND A THOROUGH SEARCH OF THE PREMISES REVEALED ONE STARTLING FACT

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



GREETINGS, DEAR READER! WE MEET AGAIN! REMEMBER ME? I AM THE OLD WITCH! IN EACH ISSUE OF THIS, THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAGAZINE, I BRING A FRIGHTFUL TALE FROM MY CAULDRON! THIS TIME, I HAVE DOORED UP A GUILTY-DILETT! I CALL IT...

DEATH SUITED HIM!

MY STORY BEGINS ON A BLACK NIGHT IN A DESERTED GRAVEYARD! THE SOUND OF DIGGING SHATTERS THE DEAD SILENCE.

JUST THIS LAST TALK, JOHN BAXTER... AND THEN, TOMORROW MORNING, MY VICTORY WILL BE COMPLETE!

WELCH, THE DARK FIGURE BARGES THE SOFT EARTH, OPENING THE EVER-WIDENING BLACK HOLE...

A FEW MORE FEET AND I'LL REACH YOUR COFFIN, JOHN BAXTER... AND THAT CURSED FOXGLO? THEN... I'LL HAVE EVERYTHING!



WHAT DOES THIS STRANGE FELLOW WHO DIES AT GRAVES IN THE BLADE OF NIGHT WANT WITH BARTER'S TUXEDO, YOU ASK? LET ME TELL YOU HIS STORY WHILE HE LIVES!



HIS NAME IS LAWRENCE CABOTT! WE HAVE TO GO BACK INTO THE PAST... TO LAWRENCE CABOTT'S COLLEGE DAYS... TO PICK UP HIS STORY!

HEY, CABOTT? I HEAR YOU AND JOHN BARTER ARE BOTH NOT ORIGINALLY ANDERSON!

CUT IT OUT, WILL YOU, DAN?



YOU'RE GOING HAVE TO GO SOME TO GET ~~HER~~ LARRY! BARTER'S OLD MAN'S SON DOWN, YOU KNOW?

THAT'S JUST MY TROUBLE! I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE HER OUT LIKE JOHN DOES!



THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS! JOHN BARTER AND LAWRENCE CABOTT WERE BOTH IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL! JOHN WAS RICH... WHILE LARRY JUST MANAGED TO SCRAPE UP ENOUGH TO GET THROUGH COLLEGE...



ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR, LARRY, ISN'T IT?

SURE, JOHNNY BART!

AND THEN THAT FATEFUL DAY ARRIVED! THE FRATERNITY THAT JOHN AND LARRY BELONGED TO WAS INVITED TO A GRADUATION DANCE, GIVEN BY MARY ANDERSON'S SOCIETY...



...AND IT'S STRICTLY FORMAL, YOU GUYS! ROBERT DOES WITHOUT A FIOF!

WHA...?

IT MATTER LARRY? CAN'T YOU AFFORD ONE?

IT WAS A BAD BREAK FOR LARRY! JOHN ~~HAD~~ TUXEDO, AND SO HE WENT TO THAT DANCE... WHILE LARRY STAYED BEHIND...



GARNETT! JUST MY LUCK! JOHNNY'LL PROBABLY MAKE TIME WITH NANCY TONIGHT!

BUT WHEN THE BOYS RETURNED LATE THAT NIGHT...



HEY, LARRY! CONGRATULATE ME! NANCY AND I ARE ENGAGED! WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED RIGHT AFTER GRADUATION!

I... I... I SEE!

IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT DAMNED FALLOUT OF YOURS, JOHN BAXTER, NANCY ANDERSON WOULD HAVE BEEN MY WIFE!



BUT...WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT, YOU ASK? LET ME CONTINUE! JOHN AND NANCY WERE MARRIED!

GO AHEAD, LARRY!
END THE RIDGE!



NANCY'S FATHER GAVE JOHN A GOOD POSITION IN HIS FIRM, AND JOHN WAS SET...

WHILE IN HIS SMALL OFFICE LARRY STRUGGLED TO MAKE ENDS MEET...

TAKE A LETTER,
MISS BLAIR!

YES, MR.
BAXTER!



DAY IN AND DAY OUT...WAITING FOR THAT PHONE TO RING! WAITING... WAITING! WILL I EVER BE A SUCCESS?



...AND BROODS...

FOR HE IS JOHN'S SHOES TODAY!
FOR HE HAS EVERYTHING THAT
HE HAD...



...AND THEN HE MADE HIS DECISION...

BUT I CAN HAVE NANCY... JOHN'S JOB... MONEY... PRESTIGE! I'LL TAKE THEM FROM HIM! THEY SHOULD BE MINE, ANYWAY! I'LL KILL HIM!



LARRY GREAT PLANNED IT VERY CAREFULLY...EVERY DETAIL! ONE NIGHT, ON A LONELY ROAD...

LARRY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE AT THE HOUSE FOR DINNER! WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

MY CAR BROKE DOWN, JOHN! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO COME ALONG!



IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, LARRY! NANCY WILL BE THRILLED!

YES! SHE'LL PROBABLY GET THE BRIDE OF HER LIFE!



AS HE STRUGGLED JOHN, LARRY GRABBED THE WHEEL AND GUIDED THE CAR TO A STOP! THEN HE DROVE TO A POINT WHERE THE ROAD SKIRTED A MOUNTAINCLIFF...

THIS IS PERFECT!



PROPPING THE UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE OF JOHN BEHIND THE WHEEL, LARRY RELEASED THE BRAKE ON THE CAR AND LET IT ROLL TOWARD THE CLIFF EDGE! THEN...



THEY CALLED IT AN ACCIDENT! LARRY'S PLAN HAD WORKED PERFECTLY! AT THE FUNERAL, HE COMFORTED THE GRIEF-STROCKEN NANCY...

OH, MY NANCY! HE WOULD SOON HAVE WANTED OUT THAT MAN, SON... SON...



THE MONTHS PASSED, AND LARRY HENCE CANNOT CARE TO CALL MORE AND MORE OFTEN AT THE HOME OF THE YOUNG WIDOW, NANCY BASTER...

YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU, NANCY! YOU CAN'T THROW IT AWAY!

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, LARRY!



AND THEN... ONE EVENING...

NANCY! YOU KNOW HOW I'VE FELT ABOUT YOU... EVER SINCE COLLEGE!

YOU'RE SWEET, LARRY!





HARRY ME, NANCY! LET
ME TAKE JOHN'S PLACE!
I LOVE YOU!

I'VE
ALWAYS
LIKED
FOO!
LARRY...



THEN SAY "YES"...
SAY "YES"!

ALL RIGHT,
LARRY! I'LL
MARRY FOO!



AND SO, LARRY HAD GOTTEN WHAT
HE WANTED! NANCY WAS GOING TO
BE HIS WIFE! IN HIS ROOM, THE
NEXT BEFORE THE WEDDING...

HA-HA! I'VE WON AT LAST, JOHN
BAXTER! I'VE WON AT LAST!



I'VE GOT IT ALL! EVERYTHING I WOULD HAVE
GOTTEN IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT **TUXEDO** YOU HAD
WHEN WE WERE IN COLLEGE! BUT NOW I... E...



YOUR TUXEDO! THAT WOULD CROWN MY VICTORY!
TOMORROW WHEN I MARRY NANCY, I'LL WEAR **FOUR
FOXES**... THE ONE **THEY** BURED YOU IN!



THE GATES TO THE CEMETERY CREAKED OPEN, AND
LARRY... HIS EYES WIDE AND STIRING... ENTERED!
HE CARRIED A SPADE...



SLOWLY HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE GRASS...
BETWEEN THE HEADSTONES... UNTIL HE CAME TO THE
ONE MARKED "JOHN BAXTER"...

JUST THIS LAST YEAR, JOHN
BAXTER... AND THEN, TOMORROW
MORNING, MY VICTORY WILL BE
COMPLETE!

AND THAT IS LAWRENCE
CARROT'S STORY... SO PAUP
BUT? HEAR THAT MELLOW
BOOM? THE GORFFIN! LET'S
SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO...



AGH! NOW TO OPEN YOUR
CASKET AND STEAL YOU OF
YOUR LAST POSSESSION.
JOHN BAXTER!



H-H-H-H! FOUR MONTHS IN THE GROUND
HASN'T HARMED IT ANY! IT'S STILL
IN GOOD CONDITION!



LARRY CARROT REMOVED THE FLOTTING FROM THE
CORPSE OF JOHN BAXTER AND RE-COVERED THE
GRAVE! THEN...



...AND NOW FOR SOME SLEEP! TOMORROW
IS A BIG DAY!

YOU THINK HE'S MAD, DON'T YOU WELL, YOU MAY BE RIGHT!
IN ANY CASE, THE NEXT MORNING LARRY DRESSED IN JOHN'S
TUXEDO...



YES, JOHN! IT FITS. FINALLY FIT INTO EVERYTHING
OF YOURS. FINE! AH-HA!

THE CHURCH WAS HOT! AND AS LARRY STOOD IN THE
VESTRY, WAITING FOR THE CEREMONY TO BEGIN...



WHERE! IT'S CERTAINLY HOT IN HERE THIS
MORNING! I... I... FEEL... STRANGE...

SOON THE FAMILIAR STRAINS OF THE WEDDING MARCH
EDGED THROUGH THE VAULTED ROOM...



IT... MUST BE MY... IMAGINATION... BUT I FEEL...
AS THOUGH... THIS... JURY... WERE CONSIDERING ME!

NANCY MADE HER APPEARANCE AND STARTED DOWN THE LONG AISLE...



H. HURRY! I.I. CAN'T BREATHE!
I.I. I DON'T...THINK I CAN...LAST
THROUGH...THE...CEREMONY!

LARRY'S BRAIN WAS REELING! EVERYTHING SWAM BEFORE HIM! AS HE STEPPED FORWARD...



CRUSHING...THE LIFE OUT OF
ME...NOT...CAN'T BREATHE?

WE ARE GATHERED
TOGETHER TO
WITNESS THE...

THEM WERE PLANNED, NOW... THEN A DECREE...



...LET HIM SPEAK NOW,
OR FOREVER HOLD
HIS PEACE...

JOHN... HE... HE'S
CRUSHING ME... KILLING
ME! I...!

IN A LAST MAD FIT, BEFORE THE BLACKNESS CLOSED IN, LARRY TOOK JOHN'S TUXEDO FROM HIMSELF...



YAAAAA AAAAH!

LARRY... I NOW
PROCLAIM
YOU...WHAT

THE GROUP THAT HAD COME TO WITNESS THE WEDDING WAS SHOCKED SOMEONE RUSHED FORWARD TO EXAMINE THE PROSTRATE LARRY...



HE... HE'S DEAD? DEAD?

YES! HE WAS DEAD! AFTER A MEDICAL EXAMINATION WAS MADE...

STRANGE! THIS REPORT SAYS THAT LARRY DIED OF POISONING FROM EMBALMING FLUID!

EMBALMING FLUID? BUT HOW DID LARRY EVEN COME IN CONTACT WITH THAT?



HEA, HENT WE KNOW HOW, DON'T WE, DEAR READERS? WHEN LARRY GOT HOT UNDER THE COLLAR, HIS BODY ABSORBED THE EMBALMING FLUID WHICH HAD CONTAMINATED JOHN'S TUXEDO! AND NOW, LARRY REALLY HAS EVERYTHING THAT JOHN HAD! NO NANCY... NO JOB... NO PRESTIGE... NO NOTHING! JUST A BIG, COOL COFFIN IN A BIG, COOL GRAVE!

